

X-FACTOR

ISSUE 26



RATED T+



\$2.99 US \$3.05 CAN

MESSIAH COMPLEX

chapter seven

DAVID

MARVEL

EATON

MESSIAH COMPLEX

CHAPTER SEVEN

X-FACTOR



MARVEL
VARIANT
EDITION

26

DAVID
EATON

RATED T+



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\$2.99 US \$3.05 CAN

DIRECT EDITION

After M-Day, mutantkind neared extinction. Once hailed as humanity's replacement, it appeared mutants, now reduced to a few hundred, would fade into oblivion. But a new mutant baby has arrived, the first since M-Day, and with it, hope for mutantkind.

Previously in MESSIAH COMPLEX...

On the day of its birth the new mutant baby was kidnapped. The X-Men suspected the evil geneticist Mr. Sinister in the disappearance. But it was one of their own, the rogue mutant Cable, who took the child. As the X-Men learned this, the giant Sentinel robots guarding the Xavier Institute malfunctioned and attacked them, destroying the mansion in the ensuing battle. The Sentinel pilots were infected with a nano-tech virus. Cyclops, leader of the X-Men, knows the last person in possession of the virus was Cable. In response, he unleashed his secret weapon, the covert ops squad X-Force, to recover the baby, even at the cost of Cable's life. But Lady Deathstrike and her mercenary Reavers are also on the hunt...

Meanwhile Jamie Madrox, the Multiple Man, lies in a coma after sending one of his duplicates to an alternate future in search of clues about the baby's destiny. To the surprise of all involved, the mysterious Layla Miller tagged along, with no hope of returning home.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

Peter David: *Writer*

Scot Eaton: *Penciler*

John Dell w/Andrew Hennessy: *Inkers*

Frank D'Armata: *Colorist*

Joe Caramagna: *Letterer*

Will Panzo: *Assistant Editor*

Nick Lowe: *Editor*

Axel Alonso: *Executive Editor*

Joe Quesada: *Editor in Chief*

Dan Buckley: *Publisher*

Cover A by: Finch, Miki, Keith

Cover B by: Silvestri, Weems, Firchow







NOT LIKE THIS.
THE SURVIVAL OF
OUR RACE IS AT
STAKE.

IN TIMES
SUCH AS THESE--
AS MUCH AS I HATE
TO HEW TO CLICHE--
TWO HEADS ARE
BETTER THAN
ONE.



TWO HEADS
GO IN TWO
DIRECTIONS. WE
CAN'T AFFORD
THAT NOW.



ALL RIGHT,
SCOTT...MESSAGE
RECEIVED. I'LL DO
WHAT YOU NEED.
I'LL BACK OFF.



CHARLES, YOU KNOW
THAT'S NOT GOING TO
HAPPEN. WE'RE GOING
TO HAVE DOZENS OF
CONFRONTATIONS
LIKE THIS.

I CAN'T
HAVE THE
DISTRACTION.



YOU
DON'T
MEAN...



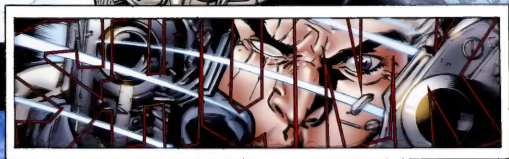
YOU
CAN'T BE
SERIOUS.

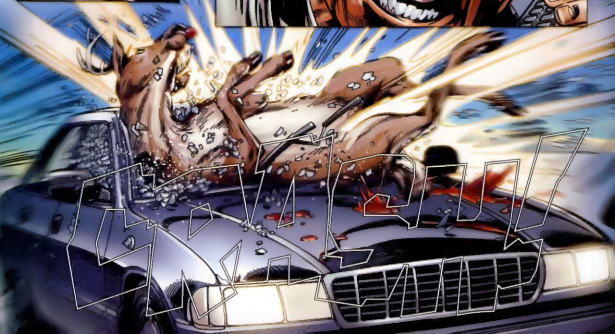
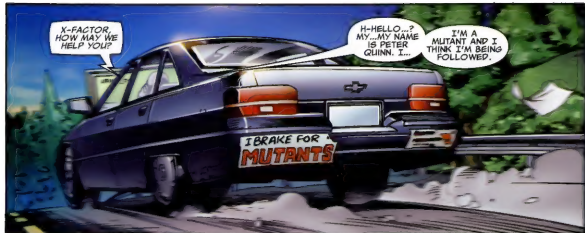


CHARLES,
YOU TRAINED
ME.
LET
ME DO MY
JOB.

X
SOMEWHERE
IN CANADA



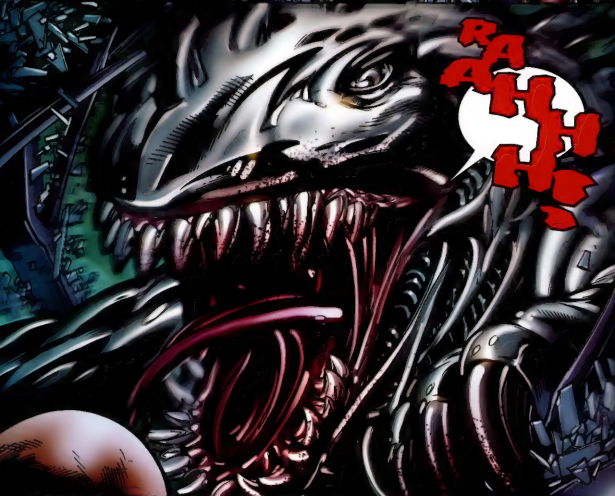






AW GOD...
SOMEBODY HELP
ME...SOMEBODY
GET ME OUT OF
HERE.

H-HELLO?
IS...SOMEONE
THERE? I...CAN'T
SEE...CAN'T SEE...
ARE YOU FROM
X-FACTOR?



RAHHH



EEEEYAAAAA

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK CITY.
SHEEPSHEAD BAY MUTANT RELOCATION CAMP.
80 YEARS FROM NOW...

WE ARE
SO DAMNED
LATE...

HEY, YOU'RE
THE ONE WHO WAS
SO MINDBLASTED
AFTER THE PARTY THAT
I PRACTICALLY HAD TO
PICK UP PIECES OF
YOUR BRAIN OFF
THE--

HOLD
IT. DO
YOU--?

YEAH, I
SEE IT.

COULD
BE AN
AMBUSH.

AW
COME ON...

DON'T "AW
COME ON" ME.
MUTANT'S'LL DO
ANYTHING TO
CATCH US OFF
GUARD.

WHATEVER.
WELL...?

GIVE ME
A MINUTE.
WILL YA...?



OKAY. SHE'S
CLEAN. NOT A
MUTANT. WE CAN
HELP HER.

I'VE
GOT THIS,
TANGRETTI.

HONEY? ARE
YOU OKAY?
WHO DID THIS
TO--



HOLD IT!
HER READINGS JUST
SHIFTED! NOW I'M
GETTING A MUTANT
READ OFF HER!



WHAT CAN
I SAY? IT COMES
AND GOES.

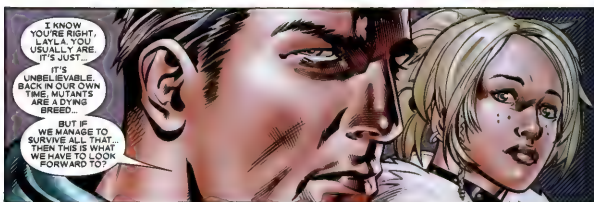
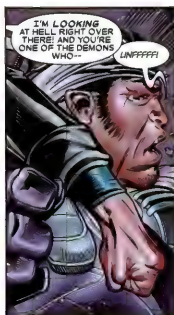
DON'T
HURT THEM TOO
MUCH, JAMIE.

ACTUALLY,
LAYLA...

I'M THINKING
THAT, HOWEVER
MUCH WE HURT
THEM...

IT'S GOING
TO BE JUST
ENOUGH!





"WHAT KIND OF
FUTURE DO YOU
CALL THAT?"

COOPERSTOWN, ALASKA.
NOW.

UNIT THREE,
REPORT IN.

UNIT THREE
REPORTING IN.
ALL'S QUIET.

WHOLE
LOT OF
NOTHIN'.

WITH ALL
RESPECT, SARGE,
THE GUYS WHO DID
THE DAMAGE AIN'T
COMING BACK.

THIS IS
LIKE CLOSING
THE BARN DOOR
AFTER--

CRUNCH

UNIT THREE?
PROBLEM?

NO. NO
PROBLEM. JUST MY
IMAGINATION.

LINFFFFF!!!

UNIT THREE,
REPEAT, I DIDN'T
COPY THAT.

LIN-
HINH.

GOOD.
BASE OUT.

OH, THAT WAS
BLEEDING STEALTHY,
WARPATH.

I
DON'T DO
STEALTHY.

YOU'LL DO
WHAT YOU'RE TOLD.
THERE'S NOTHIN' IN IT
FOR US TO HAVE TO
FIGHT OUR WAY
IN.

TRUE. ON THE
OTHER HAND, HAVING
A WALKIE-TALKIE SO WE
CAN LISTEN IN ON THE
COPS AND TRACK THEIR
MOVEMENTS LESSENS THE
CHANCE OF HAVING
TO FIGHT OUR
WAY OUT.

HEPZIBAH, YOU'RE
IN CHARGE OF THE
SQUAWK BOX.
REST OF
YOU, LET'S
MOVE.



OKAY. SO FAR, SO GOOD.

WHEN WE WERE FIRST HERE, THERE WAS TOO MUCH CRAP IN THE AIR TO GET ANY SCENT. PLUS WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WE WERE LOOKIN' FOR.

NOW WE ARE KNOWING. CABLE.

RIGHT. BETWEEN THAT AND THE SMOKE AND CHEMICALS HAVING DISSIPATED, WE GOT A BETTER SHOT.

WE SPLIT INTO PAIRS. X-23 WITH ME, CALIBAN. YOU'RE WITH HEPIZBAH, WARPATH WITH WOLFSBANE...

NO OFFENSE TO RAHNE, BUT I'D RATHER WORK WITH HEPIZBAH.

YOU GO WHERE I SAY. CLEAR?

RAHNE?

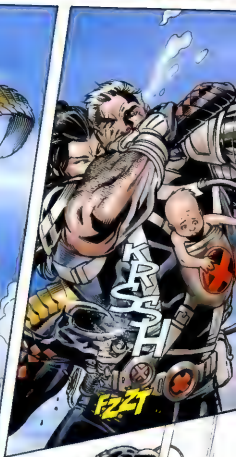
AYE, SIR.

KEEP AN EYE ON HIM.

WHEN THE MOMENT COMES AND IT'S GONNA, WE CAN'T HESITATE. HE CAN'T HESITATE...

WARPATH'S VALUABLE TO THE MISSION. BUT IF THERE'S ANY CHANCE HE'S GONNA FALTER AT THE FINISH LINE, I'VE GOTTA KNOW.







WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE?

FOR WHAT?

DON'T GET CUTE FOR THE CAMPS.

OH, LIKE YOU DON'T KNOW...



LET'S PRETEND WE'RE NEW IN TOWN. HARD TO GET UP TO SPEED WHEN NO ONE TALKS OR WRITES ABOUT MUTANTS.

IT'S A NON-ISSUE. THE GOVERNMENT MONITORS ALL COMMUNICATIONS, WRITTEN AND SPOKEN. ANYONE EVEN MENTIONS MUTANTS, THE GOVERNMENT SHUTS 'EM DOWN AND DELETES THE REFERENCES.

YOU CAN'T MONITOR WHAT EVERY PERSON EVERYWHERE SAYS

YOU REALLY ARE NEW IN TOWN, AREN'T YOU?

THE CAMPS. WHAT CAUSED THEM? WHO'S TO BLAME FOR...

MUTANTS, OR RATHER, A MUTANT. YOUR TYPE HAS NO CAUSE FOR COMPLAINING ABOUT THE CAMPS...

WHO'S TO BLAME? YOU ARE, YOU IDIOT.

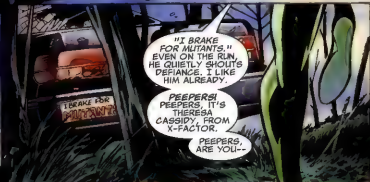
YOU BROUGHT 'EM ON YOURSELVES.



COME
ON, COME ON,
PEEPERS...WHERE
ARE Y--



BINGO.



"I BRAKE
FOR MUTANTS."
EVEN ON THE RUN,
HE QUIETLY SHOUTS
DEFIANCE. I LIKE
HIM ALREADY.

PEEPERS!
PEEPERS, IT'S
THERESA
CASSIDY. FROM
X-FACTOR.

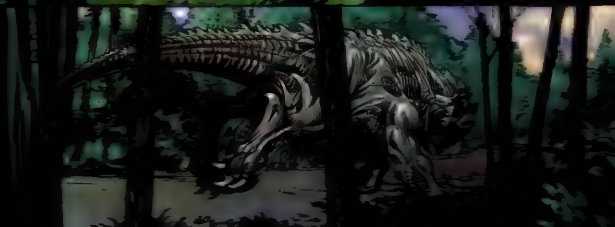
PEEPERS,
ARE YOU--



JESUS,
MARY AND
JOSEPH.

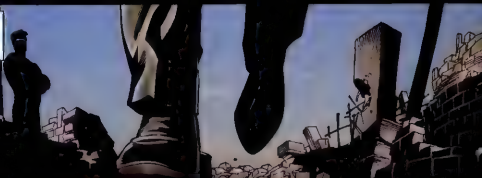


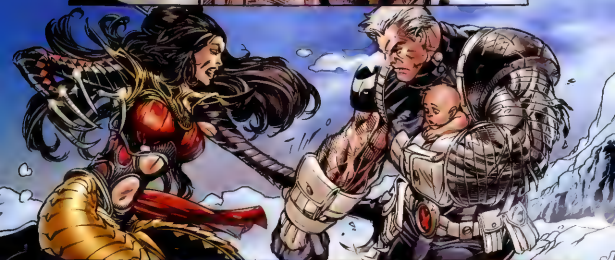
WHAT COULD
POSSIBLY HAVE
DONE THIS?





"WELL, LET'S JUST
HOPE HIS DADDY-
ISSUES DON'T KEEP
HIM FROM GETTIN'
THE JOB DONE."









AMMMH.
DAMN IT!

POWER
DAMPENER
ENGAGED!



GET
YOUR HANDS
OFF--



YOU
ALL RIGHT,
HONEY?

WAS HE
USING YOU
AS A HOSTAGE?
THAT'S IT,
ISN'T IT?

NO, I'M HIS
ACCOMPLICE.

I MAY NOT
"READ" LIKE A
MUTANT RIGHT NOW...
BUT THAT'S MY POWER.
I AM A MUTANT.
JUST LIKE HIM.

WHEREVER
YOU'RE TAKING
HIM, I BELONG
THERE, TOO.



DUMB,
LAYLA. REAL
DUMB.

YES,
WELL...

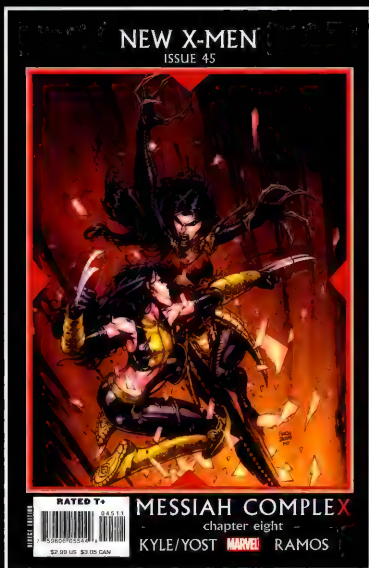


"IT SEEMED
LIKE A GOOD
IDEA AT
THE TIME."

**TO BE CONTINUED
IN NEW X-MEN #45**

X-MEN: MESSIAH COMPLEX

CHAPTER 8



NEXT WEEK
X-FORCE VS. THE REAVERS.
MADROX AND LAYLA IMPRISONED.
AND AN X-MAN WILL FALL.



VARIANT COVER

QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS!

WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR COMIC BOOKS?

"Some get bagged and boarded, all the rest get donated to either kids-oriented charity or the USO."

- MARC GUGGENHEIM - Writer

(Amazing Spider-Man, Marvel Comics Presents)

"I stockpile them and give them out on Halloween, reasoning that it's better to rot a kid's mind than his teeth."

- PETER DAVID - Writer

(X-Factor, She-Hulk)

"I box them in no particular order into long boxes and file them away... never to be seen or heard from again. I currently have about 40 long boxes in my basement. I dream of one day organizing them... but y'know... I'm sure that'll never happen."

- ROBERT KIRKMAN - Writer

(Marvel Zombies II, Ultimate X-Men)

"I stack them next to my bed until I've read them. Then I stack them in my wardrobe, against the day when I'll put them in long boxes in some kind of order. It's never going to happen."

- MIKE CAREY - Writer

(X-Men, Ultimate Fantastic Four)

"Read them, then drop them in long boxes, as is, no bags or boards and in no particular order. I keep telling myself I'll organize them some day."

- C.B. CEBULSKI - Writer

(Loners, Fairy Tales)

"No bagging, keep some, give some to local kids of all ages! Oh, and I use long boxes to prop up parts of my office!"

- JOHN ROMITA Jr. - Artist

(World War Hulk, Amazing Spider-Man)

"I occasionally read them but mostly they sit in boxes until somebody comes along and says 'Oh look, comics, can I have them?' It's not that I don't like them but that I never seem to have the time to read them. My kids are more into games than comics and if I took them home my wife would hate them cluttering up the house. Simple answer: I stockpile and other people read them."

- BRYAN HITCH - Artist

(Ultimates, Fantastic Four)

"When I get extras, I give them to my cheapskate friends. If I get 1 or 2, I keep 'em for myself."

- LEINIL YU - Artist

(New Avengers)

"I give them away to anyone who wants to read them and the ones that I read while outside of my home or office, I pay forward. In other words I leave them in assorted places. Whether it be airport terminals, the train, doctors' offices, anywhere I finish a comic is where I leave it; you never know who may pick it up next."

- JOE QUESADA - Marvel Editor-in-Chief, Artist

(Amazing Spider-Man)

NOW YOU KNOW!

WHAT IF?



CIVIL WAR

ED BRUBAKER

KEVIN GREVIOUX

CHRISTOS GAGE

MARKO DJURDJEVIC

GUSTAVO

HARVEY TOLIBAO

A MARVEL COMICS EVENT IN ONE PART

COVER BY MARC SILVESTRI

WRAPAROUND COVER
BY MARKO DJURDJEVIC

DECEMBER 2007

MARVEL[®]

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Incredible.



HULK

A new ongoing series.

Jeph Loeb • Ed McGuinness

January 2008

MARVEL
YOUR UNIVERSE

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PORTFOLIO REVIEW

What happens when you get better after having a nuclear bomb dropped on you? If you're the Hulk, you go smash the person responsible for your Stark. From the mind of writer Warren Ellis and brought to powerful life by Cory Clark, comes the fight of the century, Ultimate Iron Man vs. Ultimate Hulk locked in a battle of wills...and fists... as they find who is the ULTIMATE HULK!

We sat down with artist Cory Clark and editor Bill Rosemann to get their take on the players involved and what it takes to bring together the two most powerful, and misunderstood, men in the Ultimate Universe!



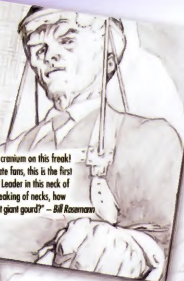
"Just look at poor ol' Bruce Banner. Don't you want to buy him a hot cup o' coffee and a slice of rhubarb pie? Looks like our sad sack scientist has reached the bottom of the barrel. Must be the weight of that giant monster within pressing down on his soul." — Bill Rosemann

"He's a walking jet, head of his own multi-billion-dollar company, and the ladies love him. So why is the cool exec with the heart of steel down in the dumps? Hmmm... maybe he and Bruce Banner are on either side of one twisted coin." — Bill Rosemann

"After coming from the barbarian world of the Conan series, drawing a man in high-tech armor has been both challenging and interesting, but I have to say, I get the most enjoyment out of drawing Hulk. He's just raw power and aggression and it's easy to lose yourself in that." — Cary Nord



"Gah! Look at the cranium on this freak! That's right, Ultimate fans, this is the first appearance of the Leader in this neck of the woods. And speaking of necks, how does he hold up that giant gourd?" — Bill Rosemann



"The best moment of issue one is when the Hulk starts breaking loose in Tony's containment tank. It's one of those, 'Oh, crap!' moments." — Cary Nord



"Can artist Cary Nord draw a scary gray goliath or what? Okay, who went and made Bruce Banner angry?" — Bill Rosemann



ULTIMATE HUMAN
BEGINS JANUARY 2008

LOOK WHO'S TALKING!

COMIC BOOK WRITER BRIAN REED



MARVEL: So... you're a Skrull? ...Skrull?

BRIAN REED: If you love what I've been writing, then no, I'm not a Skrull. If you don't love it, then your excuse is that I'm a low-down dirty Skrull.

MARVEL: You've been working on *NEW AVENGERS: ILLUMINATI* with Bendis, so is it safe to say you do know who is a Skrull?

BRIAN REED: I know Bendis likes to paint his head green and run around in a Super Skrull costume, including a big foam Thing fist.

MARVEL: With the recent announcement of *SECRET INVASION: THE INFILTRATION*, it looks like a number of books you work on are laying the groundwork for the invasion; both Marvel's -- Captain and Ms. Any reason why the Skrulls seem to be targeting these two?

BRIAN REED: Oh, there are all kinds of reasons the Skrulls would be interested in each of them. She's in charge of the Mighty Avengers-- Earth's greatest super team. He's pretty much single-handedly responsible for undoing the Skrulls' entire plan in the Kree/Skrull war. Because of that interest, both the Marvels are key players in the Secret Invasion.

MARVEL: Captain Marvel's return is not exactly what it seemed. You've said he is going to die, it's just a matter of if he will die here or get back to his own time. What dangers lie in him dying now?

BRIAN REED: All of time and space collapsing around your ears,

which makes a heck of a lot of noise, and tends to result in mass death and destruction.

MARVEL: Is that part of the Skrulls' plan?

BRIAN REED: Death and destruction? You bet.

MARVEL: Ms. Marvel's leading the greatest team in the Initiative right now, the Mighty Avengers, in addition to her own team. Surely SHE'S not a Skrull, is she?

BRIAN REED: A shameless plug now as I mention that the last page of Ms. Marvel #24 (and issue #25-27) will answer that question for you.

MARVEL: What about the members of her new team? They seemed to come at a rather convenient time, didn't they?

BRIAN REED: Machine Man would say something rude if he were here.

MARVEL: Will the Captain and Carol meet up, since you write both?

BRIAN REED: Yep. She's in the pages of the Captain Marvel mini-series.

MARVEL: And what of Mary-Vell's son, Teddy "Hulking" Altman? Will he meet his father? There must be some serious ramifications to that?

BRIAN REED: *Young Avengers Presents #2* is all about the moment that Teddy meets the father he thought was dead, and Captain Marvel gets to decide if he believes Teddy is really his son or not. Mar-Vell's been out of circulation for a few years, so it really is a bit of a shock for him to have this kid show up, and know intimate details about Mar-Vell's... intimate details.

MARVEL: Finally, give us a tease here -- we know that Bendis has been planning this story for 5 years, and that other writers have been in on it for a while now too. Are any of the characters you have written in the past year, or are currently writing, Skrulls?

BRIAN REED: Three of the characters I've worked with in the past year are really Skrulls. I think all three of them will come as total surprises, but I've tried to lay groundwork with each of them that keeps the reveals from being "cheap." The real surprise is that I reveal someone is actually a Kree! While the rest of Marvel goes one way, I run the other!



'Nuff Said!

QUESTIONS THAT NEED ANSWERS!

WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE COMIC CONVENTION EXPERIENCE??



"I walked into a room by mistake and DeForest Kelley was there, waiting to make an appearance. This was, of course, before he died. I guess it would have been more memorable if it had been after..."

- **MARC GUGGENHEIM** - **Writer**

(Amazing Spider-Man, Wolverine, Marvel Comics Presents)

"Well, I was mistaken for Jill Thompson once. That was pretty memorable. Admittedly it was in Spain, and the guy who was doing the mistaking had no idea that Jill was a female name. So it's less damning than it sounds, but still, you know... And having Larry Niven come up to me on the booth at SCCC to tell me he enjoyed reading Lucifer. That also sticks in my mind for some reason."

- **MIKE CAREY** - **Writer**

(X-Men, Ultimate Fantastic Four)

"I've had a few. I saw two guys get in a fight in front of me one time over who would win, Thor or Hulk. They were actually screaming at each other so my friend and I stopped to watch, because it was hilarious. Then they came to blows and it really wasn't very funny. We were about to break it up when the convention security came and intervened. Then it got funny again as they were screaming "THOR!" and "HULK!" at each other as they were dragged away. That would probably top my list."

- **ROBERT KIRKMAN** - **Writer**

(Marvel Zombies II, Ultimate X-Men)

"A San Diego Comic Con, where I was walking through a hotel lobby and came to a halt. Sitting there, not far away, were Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, close into each other, involved in a lengthy and what seemed friendly enough chat. I just stood there and watched these two greats for a few moments, wondering what it was they were discussing, and then went on my way."

- **PETER DAVID** - **Writer**

(X-Factor, She-Hulk)

"During my first U.S. Con (Megacon 2000) in Florida, I was standing in the urinals, doing what I went in there for, when I glanced over to my left side. Standing next to me was a Klingon; I turned and there was another to my right. "K'Plah", they both said. "Nice B'atleths," I replied. Of course only Star Trek fans will get the joke and I now have clearly revealed myself to be almost as sad. I did once contemplate buying a Star Trek uniform, but fortunately saw sense before that decision could haunt me for the rest of my life."

- **BRYAN HITCH** - **Artist**

(Ultimates, Fantastic Four)

"Drinking warm adult beverages and playing dominoes for hours with Peter "Chewbacca" Mayhew and Jeremy "Boba Fett" Bulloch at DragonCon years back."

- **C.B. CEBULSKI** - **Writer**

(Loners, Fairy Tales, Wolverine)

"I was so starstruck and just excited to see one of the biggest guys in comics, Rob Liefeld, a few years back. We had a very brief encounter and he was very nice and all. I was very nervous and awestruck when the goodbyes came and I called him "Todd."

- **LEINIL YU** - **Artist**

(New Avengers, Secret Invasion)

"The fateful day I ran into Joss Whedon at the San Diego Comic Con, right as news of Grant Morrison leaving X-Men hit the airwaves."

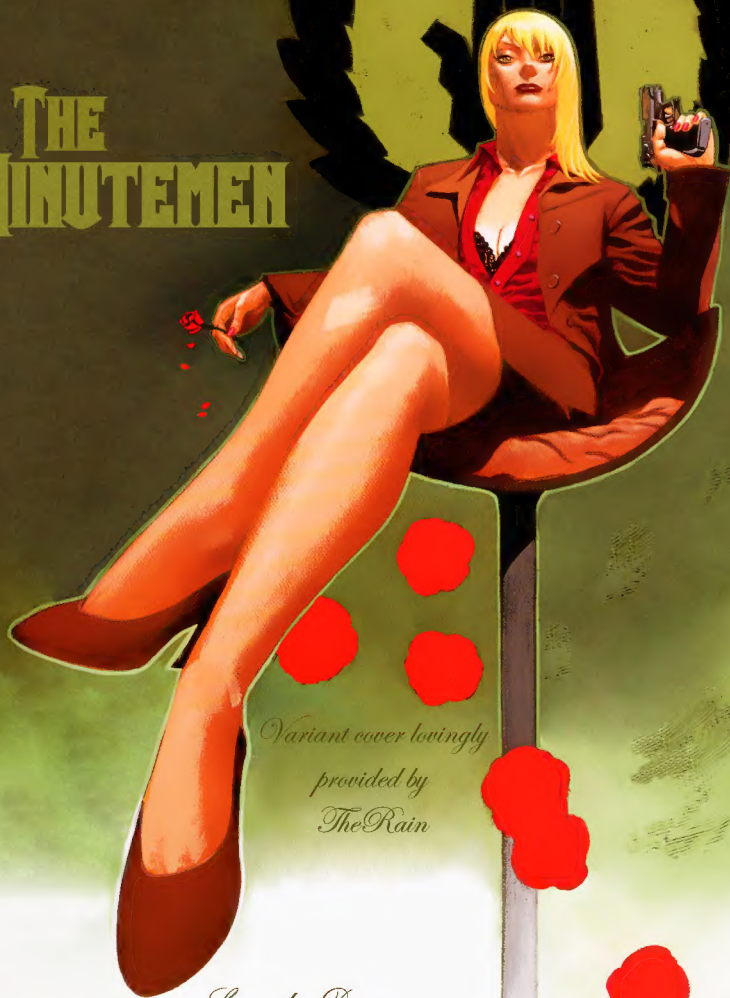
- **JOE QUESADA** - **Marvel Editor-in-Chief, Artist**

(Amazing Spider-Man)

NOW YOU KNOW!

MEGAN

THE MINUTEMEN



*Variant cover lovingly
provided by
TheRain*

Scans by Dixxy